

## KULBHUSHAN KUSHAL'S CONCERN FOR DECAYING HUMANITY

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### ABSTRACT

*Kulbhushan Kushal is a well known poet and has been writing for the last three decades. His first collection of poems 'Shrinking Horizons' was published in 1989. The second one was 'Rainbow on Rocks' in 2005, 'World Full of Echoes' in 2006 and 'Songs of Silence' in (2008). If we study these volumes, we find a poet who is profoundly philosophical, deeply sensitive and genuinely concerned about the worsening condition of human life with deteriorating human values and spiritual barrenness emerging through his collections. He brings out all his concerns for decaying humanity through images and metaphors. This paper is an attempt to explore various images and metaphors of Kulbhushan Kushal's poetry which manifests his concern for decaying humanity.*

**KEYWORDS:** Sensitive, Anarchy, Hopelessness, Materialism & Superficial

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### INTRODUCTION

Kulbhushan Kushal brings out his innermost concerns for humanity which he feels is going through a very inhuman phase and non-human attitude. The poet perceives that humanity is visionlessly going ahead without knowing where to go just like a boat left on the vast surface of the ocean having no clear idea of the direction.

Kulbhushan Kushal has captivating and alluring imagination. He is a keen and silent observer of his surroundings and very skillfully uses imagery and metaphors to express his mind and heart. His extensive knowledge and erudition of nature and society earns him the status of a sensitive poet par excellence. Supriya Bhandari, in her article 'Images and Metaphors in the poetry of Kulbhushan Kushal' says, 'Kulbhushan Kushal's poetry is an illusive enigma of a man who has drunk deep the philosophies of life. His four volumes present before the mind's eye the images which include auditory, tactile, olfactory, gustatory, kinesthetic and visual qualities. Images are the soul of poetry. They represent descriptive things, actions and abstract ideas. Images sharpen the perception and the reader undergoes the same blissful experience like as poet i.e. the ability to enjoy beyond the precincts of the concrete world'.

(<https://www.boloji.com/poem-articles/32/images-metaphors>)

### Depleting Values

Kulbhushan Kushal's poem 'Raw Deals' is full of his concern for the depleting values in human life. He says,

'The big battles and the wars  
are a quest for anarchy  
while passion for raw deals

Tempting Prepositions

Where love is not

A matter of proposals

But strictly a game of disposals'

These lines are indicative of the loss of human values from human life. Initially, wars would be followed by a period of peace, but now they lead to sheer anarchy of human emotions. The wars in the human minds do not lead to peace, but they lead man to great chaotic conditions, confusion, a whirlpool of currents and crosscurrents creating 'no understanding zone in the human mind.' Therefore, the poet calls wars 'a quest for anarchy'. N.K. Neb in his book 'Insight' writes, 'In Rainbow on Rocks' the poet registers the sensitive responses of a mind gradually exposed to the dangers of the change, informing the nature of the present day world. His poems mark the poet's encounters with different situations, his understanding of the experimental world in the culture and roots. It is through his journey in this chaotic world, marking spiritual barrenness that he notices how human beings have turned insensitive'.

### **Feeling of Hopelessness**

Love, which is the most important principle of human life, has lost its purity, its sacredness, its genuineness, its intimacy which was earlier a matter of proposals has now turned into a game of dispossessions.

The situation has really become hopeless. There is absolutely no hope for the revival of universally accepted human values that ruled humanity through all these centuries. In the poem 'Raw Deals' the poet registers his sense of this kind of hopelessness for the entire humanity with the help of the image of 'Neel Kanths'. The poet says,

'We waited for the appearance

Of two Neel Kanths

As they are carriers of luck

But we saw only one'

The carriers of luck 'two Neelkanths' cannot be seen now as there is total loss of hope in human life. One single Neelkanth cannot save humanity. The poet expresses his concern through the following lines.

'And for nights we couldn't sleep

With one Neelkanth in our eyes

How shall we swim

The starry stretches beyond the moons'

### **Loss of Vision**

N.K. Neb in his book 'Insight' expresses that oblivious to the nature of their existence, people fail to realize the deterioration that has made life stagnant. Being ignorant or insensitive to the present condition of decay, they do not ever think of changing their lot. The innate state of human existence has been expressed in Kushal's poems through the symbols of rocks. Human beings in this world have turned into rocks. They simply exist without trying to involve any vision of life.

The poem 'Dark Rainbow' is suggestive of this senseless attitude of human beings. Gone are the good old days of human life. Now there are only memories lingering in some corner of the mind. The good old days will never come back again.

'That star studded stray, glowworm weaving the magic'.

'Fairies far away dancing wild scattering their smiles'

The poet feels that everything has become the matter of the past. These are all symbols of happiness and bliss. But now the time has changed. Now there are only memories and memories. The poet's happiness now has remained a sacred treasure'.

### **Destroying Nature**

The loss of hope is to the extent that even autumns become reluctant these days. There is such a brutality played with nature rising out of cruelty of man that autumn fails to understand where to set in. The ecological balance is so disturbed that the very existence of the living is in danger.

'Since long we haven't heard.

- The cuckoo singing in the valley
- Night angels now are strangers
- Visiting us in our dreams
- Singing in deary desserts,
- Stretched for miles
- Where cactus wishes to blossom
- To be a lily'

This also shows that the golden blend that ancient man had achieved with nature is completely broken off and now man has lost respect and reverence for nature. The greed for money rising from the desire to buy material comforts has changed the beautiful world of nature into the jungles of concrete. Man has become so blind to the blessings of nature that he makes nature the victim of his cruelty. This fact leads the poet to say

'And this summer

- The hands of autumn
- May be too deary to hold
- And whither shall come
- Truncated banyans
- Naked neem trees
- Perpetual shower of yellow leaves

- Falling incrementally'

In his paper titled 'A Medium and Message' in Kulbhushan Kushal's poetry, Dr. N.K.Neb observes, 'The implied significance of nature in terms of humanistic values forms another thematic strain in Kushal's poetry. The poet seems to avert that the more and more man strays away from nature and runs in pursuit of the virtual and the cosmetic, the greater is his fall into unethical and inhuman practices.'

### **Farmers' Plight**

The poet cannot turn his blind eye to the unfortunate and tragic social phenomenon of the miserable condition of the farmers. The whole of Maharashtra is shaken with the increasing number of farmers' suicides. The dreams of a farmer are shattered to pieces when the crops fail. The condition is so pathetic that except committing suicide the farmer sees no way out. The poet is pained and his sensitive mind painfully speaks out.

- 'His crops didn't bring coins
- This year
- And the daughter couldn't be married
- To a dream prince.
- As there was nothing
- But drought.
- To give her in dowry'

The farmer facing drought conditions for years is forcibly led to the money lender who exploits him in his own way making his life a living hell.

'The money lenders

- Regular knocks
- And irregular talks
- Drove him mad'

The farmer finds no way out except to commit suicide which is the ultimate thing that he can resort to. The poet presents a dreary picture of the farmer's suicide in the following lines

'To the tree he went

And roped it snake

To support his neck

And the tree

Like good friend

Keeps his promise

Gently took him to its fold

Quietly infecting out the life'

The irony of the situation is that this moment of suicide the most tragic moment for the family becomes the moment of celebration for the farmer as the poet puts it

'Deliverance at last

A Celebration

With leaves and flowers'

### **The Day of Justice**

The loss of hope for the restoration of old human values is seen in most of the poems of Kushal. He is sure that the deterioration of human values and virtues will continue perpetually and the only day when it will stop will be the doom's day for the whole world. When 'adharm', i.e. the loss of values is total and the vices reach the apex point, it is the time for the day of justice to dawn.

The poet gloomily and hopelessly registers the fact that 'Mahapralayas' will certainly come. The Hindu scriptures speak of 'pralaya' the Quran mentions 'qayamat' the Bible has the reference to a doom's day. The poet feels that when the day of justice comes the entire globe will face total extinction.

'Floods' that have become very common today will become more intense and fierce and will wipe out the entire humanity. First, they will cause large scale destruction. In the following line, he observes

'The floods are here again

To express their anger and vengeance

To eat our crops

And to frighten our children

To take away our homes'

But there is also a great warning, which heralds the arrival of 'mahapralaya'

The poet says

'And the floods are here to remind us

The 'mahapralayas'

when all creation

willing slips to a sleep'

Materialism has taken the whole world in its stride and everybody runs after earning more and more wealth at the cost of human values like love, kindness, sympathy, caring and sharing attitude, rendering helping hands to others, human considerations, sense of adjustment and accommodation, patience and tolerance. Everybody has willingly hurled himself in the whirlpool of materialism where there is no room for human emotions and sentiments.

'In the tensions of the busy schedule

In this competitive world

New reality orientations

Have changed man's priorities'

Instead of peace, love, loyalty, romance and joy, human beings are engrossed in a never ending race for material wealth and worldly glory. Having lost touch with feelings, human success is seen in terms of worldly possessions and achievements. Personal progress, spiritual bliss have been replaced by careerist opportunities, individual achievements and selfish interest. Here there is only a superficial show of human emotions which have no depth and sincerity. Words are spoken but they are devoid of meaning. Words have developed only cosmetic value and have lost inner strength. There is in fact no heart to heart communication as every word spoken is directed towards material gain. The poet says

'perhaps never before

The words have suffered

Meaning hemorrhage

And nerve fracture

Medium is no more message

And messages are all messy

How to interpret the interpretations

And how to de-mean the meanings

And disrobe the colours

of valnet hued flowers'

The vulgar and deliberate display of sham emotions has become the order of the day to the extent that it has become very difficult for man to express his honest, genuine, sincere, original feelings arising from the bottom of heart. Life has become so formal that formalities and formalities alone rule the human mind. The poet is fully aware of this mechanical phase of life where smiles are also engineered and social courtesies lack warmth of feelings. He says

'You will discover then

How discourteous are our courtesies

How hollow our gratitude

The smile of a cobra

is better than your contrived thank you'

Human beings have gone away from each other that the distance that exists between them is perceptible and visible in the genuine effort that they make to show false emotional proximity.

'And all those foolish gifts

You exchange in the marriage parties

Are hackneyed tricks

To register your presence

A cheap gimmick it is'

### **Affected Family Life**

Even the family relations have undergone a sea change where formalities are observed more than the involvement of true emotions. The family values and family bonds have deteriorated in such a way that the poet feels

'We need training

To stay focused

Homes we are proud of

Are relics reckless

Nurseries

for pleasant discordances

A training ground

for involving strategies

to combat emotions'

### **CONCLUSIONS**

In this way, Kushal has the whole perephenia of life before him and he leaves no field of human activity untouched. His pain over the worsening state of human values is omnipresent in his poetry. His concern for the sick and ailing humanity which has lost all good old human values pervades his poems, which reflect the contemporary reality mirroring faithfully all that is happening around us.

Kushal's concern for the decaying humanity can be considered as the alarming predicament. The imagery and metaphors used by him in his works peep down into the unconscious boundaries of the human world signifying the degradation of human society. In the contemporary era man is ruling the digital frontier making the entire world a global village on one hand yet struggling to fight his own conscience which is constantly and unconsciously tempting him to undergo the inherent human flaws. Kulbhushan Kushal's lexical style filled with imaginations are the manifestation of these human flaws. The imagery and metaphors in his poems mark the voice and concern for decaying humanity. This acclaims and acknowledges Kulbhushan Kushal as the poet who is concerned with the issues of decaying humanity.

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